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nificance for the history of the Great lakes region and the Canadian northwest. The essential facts have all been given, and the author deserves due credit for the painstaking and industrious manner in which he has carried on his researches. But the reader must correlate the facts and interpret them for himself. This method of treatment, while similar to that of many other monographic studies, is as far removed as possible from that of the brilliantly suggestive study of the early fur trade by Charles H. McIlwain, in his introduction to Wraxall's *Abridgement of the Indian affairs*. Mr. McIlwain's study reveals what it is possible to do in a field similar to that in which Mr. Davidson has been working.

WAYNE E. STEVENS

Political history of the public lands, 1840-1862. From preëmption to homestead. By George M. Stephenson, Ph.D., instructor in history, Dartmouth college. (Boston: Richard G. Badger, 1917. 296 p. \$2.50 net)

It is encouraging to note a growing interest in the study of American public land history. The public domain has been one of the dominant forces in American history. It has been the subject of sectional controversy engaging the attention of political parties and party leaders and having a determining influence on elections and on the general course of legislation. The continued presence of free land has enabled the government to encourage immigration on an unprecedented scale, to promote internal improvements and railway building, and to foster education. It has nurtured individualism to an extent unknown in any other country. It is indeed impossible to give proper consideration to any phase of our history: economic, political, constitutional, social, religious, or æsthetic, without due recognition of the influence of the public lands. Yet it is only within recent years that the importance of this subject has been recognized. As a result, a number of researches into the field of public land history have been made and a few good monographic studies and articles have been published. Of these studies, in the reviewer's opinion, that by Mr. Stephenson is the best from the standpoint of both historical scholarship and literary presentation.

Mr. Stephenson has defined his problem as first, "to trace the history of the public land legislation in Congress"; second, "to portray the sentiment of the different sections of the country relative to the disposal of the public lands on the political and legislative situation in general in the period from 1840-1862." He presents "the fact of sectional rivalries and combinations" as his main thesis. The northwest wanted low priced lands, a low tariff, and internal improvements; the north Atlantic states wanted a high tariff, high priced lands, and internal improvements; and finally, the south Atlantic states wanted a low tariff, no

internal improvements at federal expense, and high priced public lands. Mr. Stephenson shows how these sectional rivalries developed into a bid on the part of New England and the South for western support, and how this sectional bickering culminated in a triangular contest over the public lands, which may be described as "the preëmption-distribution-cession controversy." The west favored a liberal land policy supporting preëmption: the right of first purchase at the minimum price of \$1.25 an acre, coupled with graduation of the price of unsold lands. New England opposed preëmption and graduation fearing that the system would withdraw too many laborers from her manufacturing centers. But since her primary interest was a high protective tariff, and the revenues from the sales of public lands were contributing to the piling up of a federal surplus, she was willing to compromise her difficulty by conceding distribution of the proceeds of the sales of public lands among the states in proportion to their representation in congress, in order to enable her to maintain protection by the aid of western votes. The south was opposed to both the high tariff and a liberal land policy, but in order to win western support in favor of a low tariff she came out under the leadership of Calhoun in favor of cessions of the public lands to the states in which they were located, thereby hoping to make a successful bid for western support against New England. The growth of these "sectional rivalries and combinations" are reviewed in the first six chapters by Mr. Stephenson with clearness and force, supported with a weight of evidence from congressional speeches and documents and representative newspapers of the country.

The remaining nine chapters of the monograph are devoted to a treatment of the homestead movement. The west has always held to the tenet that the public lands belong to the people and that they should be free to actual settlers on the ground that the hardships and sacrifices undergone in bringing them under cultivation constituted a sufficient payment. Free homesteads, however, were delayed until 1862, chiefly because of the opposition of the east, which regarded the public lands as worth any price that they would bring, and which further regarded the rapid settlement of the west as neither probable nor desirable. Mr. Stephenson traces the earlier beginnings of the national homestead agitation and legislation; the relation of the homestead question to other land questions, such as bounties, grants for various purposes, and graduation; and the political and legislative history of homesteads from 1844 to 1852. He analyzes the attitude of the sections toward the homestead bill of 1852 and the struggle between slavery and free lands. The importance of the homestead issue in the campaign of 1860 is the subject of a chapter of unusual interest. The last chapter deals with the enact-

ment of the homestead measure of 1862. The volume is concluded by a brief retrospect which summarizes the whole period from 1840 to 1862.

Mr. Stephenson's study is a noteworthy contribution to the history of the period. Deficiencies of course will readily occur to the critical student, but on the whole the work has been well done. It is to be hoped that similar studies of the period from 1862 to 1890 will soon be undertaken.

The text is provided with an excellent analytical table of contents, copious footnotes, an extensive classified bibliography, and a useful index. It is printed on good paper and bound in neat and attractive form.

LOUIS BERNARD SCHMIDT

The anti-slavery crusade. A chronicle of the gathering storm. By Jesse Macy. [Chronicles of America series] (New Haven: Yale university press, 1919. 245 p. \$3.50)

Here is a retelling of an old story, a story which gains in effect from its isolation and separation from the political chronology of the period. The two phases of the antislavery movement are analyzed with a recognition of their relations to the armed strife that followed. The early phase showed in every state and in every section and among all classes of the white population a humanitarian acknowledgment of the desirability of restoring freedom to the negro slaves. The early crusaders found their efforts received with respect and consideration, though the institution of slavery spread in spite of their efforts. In the early thirties, however, the sectional character of the crusade became increasingly apparent and the conservative forces in the north rallied to the support of the property rights of the slaveholder. Good society bitterly denounced the agitators. Even the churches proved pliable tools of the proslavery forces. "Freedom of speech, freedom of the press, freedom of worship, the right of assembly, trial by jury, the right of petition, free use of the mails, and numerous other fundamental human rights were assailed" (p. 67). "The ruling classes resorted to mob violence," but in the south repressive legislation supplemented by social and religious ostracism enabled the proslavery element to dominate the situation and to leave the field of mob action chiefly to their northern allies. What were the fruits of repression and denial of civil liberties? Those who opposed mob violence, together with those who defended the fundamental rights of freemen, were almost inevitably drawn into a more or less active part in the antislavery crusade.

When the author takes up the political narrative at the crisis of 1850, it is refreshing to find that the brief chapter on the "Passing of the whig party" avoids the usual inaccurate reference to *the compromise* of 1850; the attempt in the same chapter to explain the election of 1852